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Assembly
California Legislature



JUAN ARAMBULA
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, THIRTY-FIRST DISTRICT

cc: Cindy Tuck

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SUB #4 - STATE ADMINISTRATION
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HUMAN SERVICES

December 16, 2005

Alan C. Lloyd, Ph.D.
Secretary, California Environmental Protection Agency
1001 "T" Street, 25th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Sunne Wright McPeak
Secretary, Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency
980 9th Street, Suite 2450
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Secretaries Lloyd and McPeak:

We, the undersigned State elected officials representing the San Joaquin Valley, hereby submit comments on the State's Goods Movement Action Plan (GM Action Plan).

In brief, the proposed *Key Infrastructure Improvement Projects* (12/05) does not adequately address the needs of the Valley and, therefore, jeopardizes the success of the State's overall goods movement strategy. We respectfully request that the list of priority projects be modified to better reflect the significance of State Route 99 (Route 99) as a key commerce corridor.

California has four major transportation regions that support goods movement: the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, the Los Angeles/Inland Empire, and the San Diego/Border corridors. California's long-term economic growth is dependent upon a comprehensive, funded transportation system. A significant inadequacy in planning for, or funding of, any one of these regions weakens the entire system and threatens our economic security and employment growth.

We have come together to support the Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (The Valley Partnership) and its recommendations related to infrastructure financing in the region. The GM Action Plan must play an integral part in financing the Partnership recommendations.

The Valley Partnership was established in 2005 by Governor Schwarzenegger for the purpose of making recommendations on how best to utilize public dollars and most quickly improve the economic vitality of the San Joaquin Valley. The Valley Partnership is also charged with reviewing state policies and regulations to ensure they are fair and appropriate for the State's diverse geographic regions, including the San Joaquin Valley.¹

¹ Governor's Executive Order S-5-05, June 24, 2005



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After reviewing the *Key Infrastructure Improvement Projects* list (12/05) we find the needs of the Central Valley Corridor have not been adequately addressed. Route 99 is the workhorse of the California Highway system. This highway experiences three times the state average in truck traffic with an expected growth rate of over 60 percent in the next 20 years. Route 99 also serves as an essential thoroughfare for agricultural goods movement in the western United States. Even the draft *GM Action Plan – Phase I: Foundations* states Route 99 is a “Major International Trade Highway Route.”

Given Route 99’s recognized importance in the State’s goods movement system, we are troubled that so little priority funding has been allocated to the Central Valley Corridor.

We draw your attention to Department of Transportation’s (CalTrans) recently released Route 99 Business Plan (Business Plan) that identifies key transportation priorities within the region. “The capacity and operational improvements identified in the Business Plan are consistent with GM Action Plan and represent a key contribution toward improving the efficiency of goods movement in the State.”²

The proposed *Key Infrastructure Improvement Projects* list totals \$14.9 billion. Of this total amount, \$13.62 billion is proposed for the Los Angeles/Inland Empire Corridor while only \$330 million is earmarked for three Route 99 projects. Further, the *Key Infrastructure Improvement Projects* list does not propose ANY priority short-term transportation projects along Route 99 and only three mid- to long-term projects.

Bringing Route 99 up to modern standards is essential to the overall growth of the State. The implementation cost for the projects identified in the Business Plan is approximately \$6 billion in 2005 dollars. Immediate funding for the top two priority categories is necessary to close at-grade intersections and widen the route to at least six lanes throughout the corridor and eight lanes in some urban areas. These projects significantly improve the safety and the capacity of this key north-south corridor.

Measurable progress toward completion of the Business Plan in the short-term is a minimum expectation of the people of the San Joaquin Valley.

We strongly support the action taken by the Valley Partnership on December 9, 2005 when they unanimously voted to adopt the Business Plan and to recommend a State investment of \$6 billion in Route 99 over the next ten years. We strongly encourage the integration of relevant portions of the Business Plan into the GM Action Plan prior to the GM Action Plan being submitted to the Governor.

² Route 99 Corridor Business Plan, December 2005, p. iv.

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Communities in the San Joaquin Valley are not asking for more than they are willing to do with their own funds. There are a variety of local revenue sources being used for Route 99 improvements, including monies in the Regional Improvement Program, regional transportation impact fees, and transportation sales tax measures (already approved and in development).

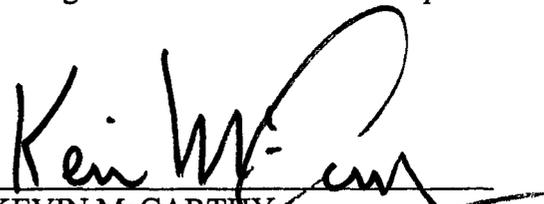
In conclusion, the purpose of the GM Action Plan is to increase California's capacity and competitive edge through improved transportation strategies. There are many excellent ideas expressed in the current draft. However, it is fatally flawed to the extent that it does not put forward a comprehensive strategy that enhances the transportation elements for *all* regions of the State.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We look forward to a final draft of the GM Action Plan that more strategically distributes our limited transportation dollars and moves the State forward to be more economically competitive in the global and domestic marketplace.

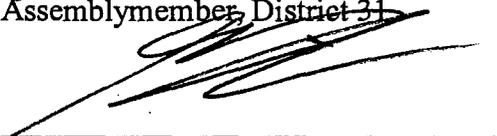
Sincerely,



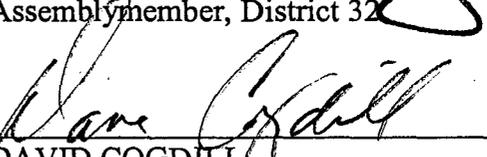
JUAN ARAMBULA
Assemblymember, District 31



KEVIN McCARTHY
Assemblymember, District 32



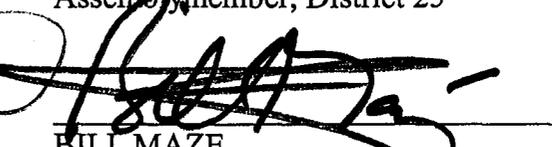
GREG AGHAZARIAN
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DAVID COGDILL
Assemblymember, District 25



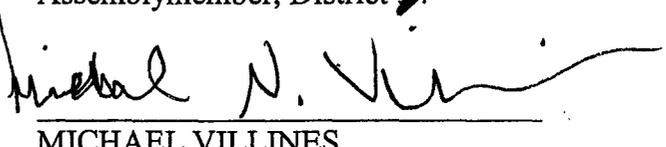
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Assemblymember, District 24



NICOLE PARRA
Assemblymember, District 30



MICHAEL VILLINES
Assemblymember, District 29

Encl: *Key Infrastructure Improvement Projects* (12/05)